

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Las Vegas, Nevada

Profile of Drug Indicators

October 2002



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Las Vegas, Nevada

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population (2000 Census): 478,434
- Race/Ethnicity (2000 Census): 58.0% white; 10.1% black/African American; 0.5% American Indian/Alaska Native; 4.7% Asian; 0.4% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0.1% other race; 2.5% two or more race; 23.6% Hispanic/Latino origin (of any race).
- Las Vegas is located in Clark County.

Politics

- Mayor: Oscar Goodman²
- City Council (Ward 1-6 respectively): Michael McDonald, Lynette McDonald, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Reese, Larry Brown, Lawrence Weekly, Michael Mack³
- City Manager: Douglas Selby⁴
- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Sheriff: Jerry Keller⁵
- Las Vegas Department of Detention and Enforcement Director: Mike Sheldon⁶

Programs/Initiatives

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)
Designated in January 2001, the Clark County HIDTA was established to combat the influx of drug trafficking in southern Nevada.⁷ This HIDTA is still in the planning stages.⁸
- Cops Racing Against Violence Through Education (CRAVE)⁹
Started in 1995, CRAVE is run by the Las Vegas Police Department with the goal of educating youths about the dangers of violence and substance abuse. The program involves officers visiting schools and appearing at Las Vegas racetracks. They also teach driver education, DUI awareness, take children on field trips, and give away scholarships.
- Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE)¹⁰
The Las Vegas Police Department DARE Program began in 1986 with assistance from the Clark County School District and Junior League of Las Vegas. The DARE program currently serves more than 15,000 fifth grade students in more than one hundred schools in Las Vegas.

Federal Funding

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program¹¹
Since FY 1998, only one coalition in Las Vegas has received funding as part of the Drug Free Communities Support Program. In FY 1998, \$98,794 was awarded to The BEST Partnership for A Drug-Free Nevada. BEST was established in 1991 as a 15-member coalition and to serve as an advisory board for an Education Department Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Grant.

- Executive Office for Weed and Seed¹²
Las Vegas has received funding and been officially recognized as a Federal Weed and Seed site.
- FY 2001 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration discretionary funds awarded to Las Vegas:¹³
 - \$60,000 awarded to the Children Services Family Network to strengthen collaboration among families, policy-makers, and service providers. The project period is 9/30/2001-9/29/2004.
 - \$1,437,732 awarded to the Nevada Neighborhood Care Center Project to enhance services in Clark County. The project period is 9/30/1998-8/31/2004.
- No grantees in Las Vegas were awarded funding as part of the Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grant Program in FY 2002.¹⁴
- Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Formula Grant, Fiscal Year 2001:¹⁵
 - The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department received \$41,250 to enhance automated toxicological analysis by purchasing new equipment. The Forensic Laboratory supports the narcotic enforcement programs of the Police Department, the multi-jurisdictional task forces and numerous other agencies and municipalities.

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- In June 2002, there were 444 drug arrests made by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.¹⁶

Juvenile and Adult Drug Arrests, Las Vegas, June 2002

Offense	Juvenile	Adult
Sale/Manufacturing	3	111
Opium/cocaine and derivatives	0	62
Marijuana	2	34
Synthetic narcotics	1	15
Other dangerous non-narcotic drugs	0	0
Possession	43	287
Opium/cocaine and derivatives	0	48
Marijuana	42	187
Synthetic narcotics	1	52
Other dangerous non-narcotic drugs	0	0
Total Drug Abuse Violation Arrests	46	398

- There were eighty-four murder/non-negligent manslaughter offenses known to the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department from January to July 2002.¹⁷

Number of Index Offenses Known to Police, Las Vegas, 1999-July 2002

Offense	Full Year 1999	Full Year 2000	Full Year 2001	Jan.-July 2002
Murder/non-negligent manslaughter	109	91	137	84
Forcible rape	532	443	447	247
Robbery	3,121	3,366	3,667	1,989
Aggravated assault	2,371	2,450	3,302	2,634
Burglary	10,130	9,535	10,083	6,220
Larceny-theft	21,793	22,095	22,394	13,762
Auto theft	9,772	9,430	10,544	6,729

- There were 129 drive-by-shooting victims in Las Vegas during 2001.¹⁸

Gang Statistics, Las Vegas, 2000-2001

	2000	2001
Gangs	321	308
Gang members	7,216	6,660
Gang associates	3,236	3,316
Drive-by shootings	98	67
Drive-by shooting victims	85	129
Non drive-by-shooting victims	76	92
Dead gang members	28	35

- From January to September 2001, more than sixty percent of Las Vegas adult male arrestees who were drug tested were positive for drugs.¹⁹

Percent Positive for Drugs, Adult Male Arrestees, Las Vegas, 2001

Drug Type	Percent Positive
Cocaine	22.1%
Opiates	5.0
Marijuana	35.3
Methamphetamine	20.9
PCP	1.8
Any of Above Drugs	60.1
Multiple Drugs	21.6

- Approximately fifteen percent of the arrestees reported past year crack cocaine use.²⁰

Arrestee Drug Use, Las Vegas, January-September 2001

Drug Type	Past 7 Days	Past Month	Past Year
Crack cocaine	3.3%	12.7%	14.9%
Powder cocaine	2.7	8.3	12.2
Marijuana	14.3	43.2	48.2
Methamphetamine	6.4	21.2	25.4
Opiates	0.0	3.5	4.8

- During 1999, 59.6% of adult male and 71.5% of adult female arrestees who were tested for drugs in Las Vegas were positive.²¹

Percent of Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs, By Offense Category, Las Vegas 1999

Offense Category	Cocaine		Marijuana		Meth.		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	20.4	18.3	29.4	31.0	13.6	14.1	52.5	46.5
Property	40.8	40.0	24.5	30.0	17.3	20.0	65.8	74.3
Drug	43.8	57.6	43.2	31.8	27.8	29.4	86.9	91.8
Drug Sales	26.1	15.4	43.5	46.2	47.8	46.2	87.0	76.9
Drug Possession	44.7	63.2	44.7	30.3	26.1	28.9	87.6	94.7
Other	27.6	46.4	28.5	19.7	17.4	18.0	58.3	67.4
Total	30.3	49.5	28.0	23.1	16.2	17.9	59.6	71.5

Drugs

- Cocaine HCL is readily available throughout southern Nevada.²²
- Club drugs, particularly MDMA, are also readily available in the Las Vegas area. Most of the MDMA that passes through or is destined for Las Vegas comes primarily from southern California and New York.²³
- There has been an increase in the prevalence of indoor marijuana cultivation in the Las Vegas area within the past year.²⁴
- Pseudoephedrine, a precursor for the manufacture of methamphetamine, remains the most commonly diverted pharmaceutical drug in the Las Vegas area.²⁵

Enforcement

- As of October 2000, there were 3,455 law enforcement personnel with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.²⁶
- Gang Diversion Unit/Gang Crimes Section²⁷
The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Gang Crimes Section was formed in 1984 (as the Gang Diversion Unit) to combat the growing gang activity and related drug sales plaguing the city.

Trafficking and Seizures

- Southern Nevada, specifically Las Vegas, serves as an importation and transshipment point for drugs destined to other areas of the country.²⁸

Courts

- Drug Courts²⁹
As of January 2002, there were three drug courts in Las Vegas that have been operating for over 2 years, one that was recently implemented, and one that is being planned.
- Of the 11,852 total criminal cases pending on December 31, 2001, there were 1,577 pending drug treatment petitions.³⁰

Consequences of Use

- During 2000, there were 286 drug-related deaths reported by Las Vegas medical examiners.³¹
- Cocaine was mentioned in ninety-five of the deaths.³²

Number of Drug Mentions in Drug Abuse Deaths, Las Vegas, 1997-2000

Drug Type	1997	1998	1999	2000
Alcohol-in-combination	73	77	80	97
Cocaine	87	89	76	95
Heroin/morphine	71	90	97	93
Marijuana	3	1	2	24
Amphetamines	34	35	31	32
Methamphetamine	53	49	45	49
Club drugs	--	1	4	8
Hallucinogens	4	2	3	--
Narcotic analgesics	63	119	126	146
Other analgesics	5	7	12	12
Benzodiazepines	59	62	66	100
Antidepressants	24	41	57	33
All other substances	31	68	78	93
Total drug deaths	188	232	252	286
Total drug mentions	507	641	677	782

Treatment

- As of May 2002, there were twenty-four treatment programs in Las Vegas certified by the Nevada Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse.³³

Sources

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

² Las Vegas Mayor Web site: http://www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us/mayor_oscar_b_goodman.htm

³ Las Vegas City Council Web site: <http://www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us/Council.htm>

⁴ Las Vegas City Manager Web site: <http://www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us/manager/default.htm>

⁵ Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Web site: <http://www.lvmpd.com/metro/metmenu.htm>

⁶ Las Vegas Department of Detention and Enforcement Web site: http://www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us/d_e/default.htm

⁷ Drug Enforcement Administration, Nevada State Factsheet: <http://www.dea.gov/pubs/states/nevada.html>

⁸ Office of National Drug Control Policy, Nevada High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Web site: http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames_nev.html

⁹ Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Cops Racing Against Violence Through Education Web site: http://www.lvmpd.com/community/com_crave.htm

¹⁰ Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Drug Abuse Resistance Education Web site: <http://www.lvmpd.com/community/cmpdare.htm>

¹¹ Drug Free Communities Support Program Web site: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/index.html>

¹² Executive Office for Weed and Seed Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/>

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- ¹³ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, FY 2001 Discretionary Funds, Nevada:
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<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/dcpo/070601.htm>
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- ¹⁷ Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Index Crime Reports:
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- ¹⁸ Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Web site, Gang Investigations Section:
http://www.lvmpd.com/metro/met_gang_unit_00.htm
- ¹⁹ National Institute of Justice, *Preliminary Data on Drug Use & Related Matters Among Adult Arrestees: January through September 2001*, 2002: http://www.adam-nij.net/files/2001_Preliminary_Data.pdf
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ National Institute of Justice, *1999 Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, June 2000: <http://www.adam-nij.net/files/INTO.PDF>
- ²² Drug Enforcement Administration, Nevada State Factsheet: <http://www.dea.gov/pubs/states/nevada.html>
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2000*, October 2001:
<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/00cius.htm>
- ²⁷ Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Gang Diversion Unit Web site:
http://www.lvmpd.com/metro/met_gang_unit_00.htm
- ²⁸ Drug Enforcement Administration, Nevada State Factsheet: <http://www.dea.gov/pubs/states/nevada.html>
- ²⁹ Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, January 17, 2002:
<http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/spa/justice/publications/drgchart2k.pdf>
- ³⁰ Eighth Judicial District Court, Las Vegas, Clark County, Nevada, Eighth Judicial District Court, 2000 and 2001 Judicial Case Activity Report: http://www.co.clark.nv.us/district_court/pdf/AR2001.pdf
- ³¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, *Mortality Data From the Drug Abuse Warning Network 2000*, January 2002: <http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/DAWN/mortality2k.pdf>
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Nevada Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Certified Treatment Programs, May 2002:
<http://health2k.state.nv.us/BADA/TreatmentPrograms.pdf>

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